

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

Meeting minutes - final

Acton Senior Center

11 October, 2012

Committee Members Present:

- David Martin
- Clare Siska
- Sean Hanley
- Tom Campbell

Committee Members Not Present:

- Michaela Moran
- Pat Clifford

Other Attendees:

- Corey York, Director of Public Works & Town Engineer
- John Sonner, BoS liason

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM.

1. Review of meeting minutes

- 06/21/12 – Mr. Hanley moved acceptance with no changes; Ms. Siska seconded; approved unanimously.
- 08/30/2012 -- Ms. Siska moved acceptance with no changes; Mr. Campbell seconded; approved unanimously.
- 09/27/2012 -- Mr. Campbell moved acceptance with no changes; Ms. Siska seconded; approved unanimously.

2. Comments from the Public

- none

3. Construction Debris

- Ms. Siska showed pictures of large piles of railroad ties that were left, west of the temporary platform and east of Martin Street. Neighbors have complained that they are unsightly, smell, and attract vermin.
- SATSAC needs an answer to provide to the public
- Mr. Martin will ask Joe Nolan what their plans are for removing the piles.

4. Construction update – concerns, schedule, disruptions, etc.

- Track alignment work is completed; most MBCR work is done for now.
- Some work is currently being done on the track side of what remains of the original platform; they appear to be putting in fencing on the track side.
- There has been no action to widen the temporary platform to date.
- The train's first car now stops at the wider section of the temporary platform, easing boarding somewhat.
- McCourt is expected to receive notice to proceed in ~ 2 weeks; can start any time after that.

- Communication methods between town engineering and MBTA, contractors yet TBD.

5. Info Meeting Debrief

- Estimated ~ 50 people attended
- Very civil
- Attendees got a lot of information
- Questions were mainly focused on construction impact for neighborhood and commuters
- The committee observes that the path under the Rt. 27 bridge is working well and wondered if it could be left in place permanently.

6. Station easements, land taking - update

- Montouri property closing is now scheduled for November, 2012; MBTA has easements for now.
- MBTA is beginning to coordinate with the Town on permanent and temporary easements for the project, particularly in parking lot area.
- A very small slip of the building footprint (north side) is on town land; will be handled via an uncontested taking, rather than an easement.

7. Sidewalks, update

- Sidewalk committee meeting was cancelled this week.
- Martin Street sidewalk is now complete. Positive feedback received.
- They have started to survey Stow Street, between Maple and Martin.

8. Publicity, website updates.

- Very difficult for IT to update our website in a timely fashion; only Town staff can update the pages.
- Mr. York can update child pages but not the SATSAC main page.
- Very important for us to be able to provide current information, which could change frequently during construction.
- Ms. Siska asserts that the information is too hard to find on our site.
- Mr. Martin proposed that we set up a separate site, akin to what Acton 20/20 did.
- Preferably we could redirect our /SATSAC URL to this new page, since that address has been publicized. Could link to the page from our town site.
- Other options, such as a blog or Facebook, were discussed and dismissed. Railchat is moderated so there is a time lag. Mr. Martin has requested that he be made a moderator on Railchat, but that should not be the primary channel.
- Mr. Martin and Ms. Siska would keep the new site updated.
- Ms. Siska moved that Mr. Martin investigate establishing an alternative website that we have direct control over updating. Mr. Campbell seconded. Passed unanimously.
- What are legal requirements for version control of content on web pages if page is updated? Mr. Martin will investigate.

9. Montouri property planning.

- Ms. Siska inquired about what is involved in pursuing the land for parking. Indicators that the town will act on this would boost ARRT chances for funding in the June, 2013 TIP process. What is involved and what is the best timing?
- Design, traffic, lighting, legal agreements will all need to be addressed and it would need to go to Town Meeting. Legalities are typically the biggest hurdle. It is a lengthy process.
- Mr. Hadley had said that once the MBTA owns the land, we could start the discussion
- One option is to add an addendum to the railroad street lot. Pros and cons need to be evaluated.

- Mr. Sonner would like to an avenue for obtaining revenue to cover the costs, contrary to the Railroad Street lot.
- Mr. Martin suggests that we target the end of project -- April 2014 Town Meeting, monitor the landtaking situation, and take this up again in January, 2013.
- Mr. Hanley requests that the design include green space and a sidewalk on north side; cites cars building up speed coming down the hill.
- South side entrance is due to open one year from now. We want a traffic plan & road design so that they can adapt to the entrance.
- Mr. Martin will make traffic calming recommendations for Maple Street a priority agenda item for the next meeting.

10. Parking issues during construction, expansion, lighting, etc.

- Reconfiguration of main lot – When do we need to start looking into the redesign?
- Mr. York suggested we need to first see what the construction company is planning. Early next year – January or February, we should have more information. Action would need to be taken ~ early 2014.
- Some members inquired about the land east of the civil defense building as possible for additional parking, but that would involve land taking or purchase. There are no plans to pursue at this time.
- There is general concern in South Acton that more green space will be lost; that will need to be a factor in any lot redesign or plans for additional parking.

11. Coordination – Sidewalks, ARRT, TAC, Economic Development Committee, etc.

- EDC wants to facilitate “last mile” project coordinate access to train station. No additional information at this time.

12. Future Meetings, Calendar.

- Upcoming SATSAC Committee Meetings
 - 11/8/12
 - 12/6/12
 - 01/03/13
 - + tbd after that
- Other significant dates:
 - TBD – Groundbreaking ceremony – Mr. Martin will ask Joe Nolan about the plans.

13. Adjourn

Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn. Mr. Hanley seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Clare Siska

Links:

<http://www.acton-ma.gov/satsac> is the SATSAC page.

<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3594/5590/default.aspx> is Littleton's MBTA Commuter Rail Advisory Committee.

http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/t_projects/default.asp?id=15585 is the MBTA site about the project.

<http://groups.google.com/group/South-Acton-Rail-Chat?lnk=srg&hl=en> – South Acton Rail Chat